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ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE DENUCLEARIZATION OF AFRICA

Letter dated 23 December 1993 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Algeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose the complete text of the statement of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Mohamed-Salah Dembri, on the occasion of the inauguration of the "Es Salam" reactor on 21 December 1993 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 67, 71 and 82.

(Signed) Rabah HADID
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Address by Mr. Mohamed-Salah Dembri, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, on the occasion of the inauguration of the "Es Salam" reactor (Birine, 21 December 1993)

The inaugural ceremony which draws us together today is of an exceptional nature because it represents a major event in the history of development cooperation.

It is also exceptional because it represents the outcome of a cooperative venture between two developing countries, Algeria and the People's Republic of China, which have joined forces in a shared and worthwhile undertaking and contributed to development through the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Such is the basis for the mutual esteem felt by our two countries and the friendship that links the Algerian and Chinese peoples.

And it is exceptional as well in that it translates into deeds the notion that security and development are indivisible, by assuring access by a country such as mine to the technologies necessary for development.

This collective venture, to which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has lent its steady support, also manifests the resolve of States to work together to eradicate the inequality, injustice and instability that arise from the arms race and its root conflicts.

Algeria is proud of the completion of this project, which bears witness to its renewed readiness to contribute to building peace and international security.

"Es Salam" is and will remain a genuine expression of Algeria's determination to make use of the technological benefits that can derive from the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It also stands as a symbol of its exemplary cooperation with IAEA, the agency entrusted by the community of nations with the task of promoting the development and practical use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes throughout the world.

I am thus pleased to announce that the cooperation between Algeria and IAEA, which, in our view, has always been distinguished by candour, transparency and mutual respect, has culminated in the conclusion of two safeguards agreements for the "Nur" and "Es Salam" reactors.

Algeria has undertaken this effort as part of a broader strategy, adopted long ago, involving the linked issues of disarmament, non-proliferation and, ultimately, peace and international security.

It believes - and this belief is continually reaffirmed - that those issues cannot be separated from socio-economic development, which is their natural corollary.

In this spirit, Algeria is endeavouring to adopt an approach to those issues which takes into account the need to ensure conditions favourable both for the creation and promotion of technical and scientific research programmes to further its economic development, and for the strengthening of its commitment to the work of the international community towards disarmament and non-proliferation.

This integrated strategy, which prompted Algeria to accede, as early as 1991, to various disarmament instruments, has culminated in its participation in the Convention on Chemical Weapons as an original signatory State and its active participation in all forums concerned with disarmament, including the United Nations, the Conference on Disarmament and the Middle East peace process.

In its ongoing policy review, Algeria has paid constant attention to assessing the question of agreements related to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. This concern finds expression in Algeria's consistent and continual support for the principles of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It was thus that Algeria had decided, on a voluntary and unilateral basis, to place its two nuclear installations, "Nur" and "Es Salam", whose exclusively peaceful usage had always been evident, under IAEA safeguards.

Within the context of fruitful, transparent relations with IAEA, and while reserving its inalienable right to access nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Algeria accords top priority to lasting international cooperation for development and for the promotion of its programmes involving research and the production, and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Absolutely dedicated to the peaceful use of the atom, Algeria confidently and unequivocally affirms its commitment to the non-proliferation regime.

Algeria says no to the military use of the atom.

This is a decision that we have freely taken, and we can thus inform you that our work on behalf of disarmament in general, and our nuclear programme in particular, do not conflict with the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

I therefore, today, in the name of the highest authorities of my country, do solemnly declare that Algeria resolves to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In taking this decision, Algeria offers its full support to a multilateral effort, which, while indeed imperfect, should be viewed from a broad and universal perspective, so that the goal of general and complete disarmament can be achieved.

Algeria subscribes to these principles in full cognizance and hopes in this way to contribute to their universality. It accepts its full responsibility in this domain.

Algeria acknowledges the tangible progress that has been made thus far, especially on the bilateral level, towards nuclear disarmament.

Such being the case, my country hopes that progress will be made concerning the security of non-nuclear States, especially in the area of negative assurances and nuclear test bans.

At the same time, it is urgent that firm, concrete efforts should be made towards the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, commencing with the most lethal of all, nuclear weapons. Under such a regime, all nuclear installations in the region would be limited to strictly civilian and peaceful purposes, and internationally monitored.

Algeria is committed to reaffirming the right of all countries to make use of nuclear technology, including education, technical assistance and the development of specific procedures for the transfer of technology for the purposes of development.

Your presence here today is an opportunity for us to happily reaffirm Algeria's staunch dedication to peace, modernity, and progress.

No obstacle of any kind should impede or hinder that resolve.

I hope thus to have informed you of certain important choices and decisions taken by my country, which demonstrate our resolve to take clear and confident steps towards strengthening the valuable ties of friendship, understanding and cooperation with all our partners.

This critical juncture in the history of the world and this decisive moment in the evolution of my country call for an act of genuine solidarity on the part of all our partners and friends, so that the values and principles of tolerance, freedom and democracy, justice, fairness and peace that guide us may be preserved and guaranteed for all.

Thank you.